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WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2016

No. 23

House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FARENTHOLD).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 9, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BLAKE FARENTHOLD to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair would now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FARENTHOLD) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask Your special blessing upon the Members of this people's House. They face difficult decisions in difficult times, with many forces and interests demanding their attention.

Enlighten the hearts of those who are faithful and tireless in securing equal justice under the law. Fulfill the hopes of those who long for peace and security for their children. Guide and protect all elected officials and all who choose to serve this Nation through public service.

Unite Your people and keep them focused on essentials that reflect Your kingdom, even in the midst of conflicting opinions, philosophical differences, and the contentiousness of an election season.

Bless us, O God, and be with us all this day and every day to come. May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BABIN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MAKING GOVERNMENT WORK BETTER

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, our charge in Congress is to be very careful and frugal and honest with the people's money that they send via their hard-earned tax dollars.

Today we have an opportunity to make good on part of that with our commitment to making the government work better for the people it serves, control spending, and work at finally getting down the national debt.

The VA medical facility construction process is broken and highly in need of major reform. For example, in Colorado, the VA spent at least triple, probably quadruple, even quintuple, what it was expected to spend on the construction of a replacement hospital due to mismanagement and lack of accountability.

The GAO found in 2013 that the VA's four largest medical construction projects were experiencing significant delays and massive cost increases. In my district, the VA plans to build two replacement clinics, in Redding and in Chico, which the VA says will take 5 years.

In order to streamline and improve the VA's medical facility construction process, the House will vote on H.R. 3106 today, which is sponsored by Chairman JEFF MILLER of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

The bill includes commonsense reforms that will require the VA to use industry standards for medical facility construction projects and increase congressional oversight.

I am proud to support this bill and to continue to work to be accountable to the American people, especially our veterans, who need and deserve clear access, present access, and timely access to the health care they deserve.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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H597

FLINT, MICHIGAN, WATER CRISIS

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, the families and the children exposed to high levels of lead in my hometown of Flint deserve action by the people who did this to them.

The State of Michigan—Governor Snyder's administration—created this public health emergency through their own inaction and by decisions that their appointed emergency manager made in the city of Flint, which has led to this crisis. They need to act in a manner equal to the gravity of this terrible situation.

The Federal Government can help as well. The President has already declared a state of emergency, but Congress can act, too. I have legislation that I introduced last week that is a comprehensive set of solutions that not only deals with the need to replace those lead service lines that are leaching lead into the water system in households, but also provides the kind of support for children and families to get through this crisis and give them, as individuals, and my community, as a community, a chance on a future.

Resources are needed, not just a get well card, not just an apology, but we need financial resources. The State needs to step up. I am asking this Congress to do so as well.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 8, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 8, 2016 at 3:26 p.m.:

That the Senate communicates S. Res. 364 (relative to the death of Marlow Cook).

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 9, 2016.

The Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following mes-

sage from the Secretary of the Senate on February 9, 2016 at 10:44 a.m.:

Appointments:

Washington's Farewell Address.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

THE BUDGET MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114-86)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

As I look back on the past seven years, I am inspired by America's progress—and I am more determined than ever to keep our country moving forward. When I took office, our Nation was in the midst of the worst recession since the Great Depression. The economy was shedding 800,000 jobs a month. The auto industry was on the brink of collapse and our manufacturing sector was in decline. Many families were struggling to pay their bills and make ends meet. Millions more saw their savings evaporate, even as retirement neared.

But thanks to the grit and determination of the American people, we rescued our economy from the depths of the recession, revitalized our auto industry, and laid down new rules to safeguard our economy from recklessness on Wall Street. We made the largest investment in clean energy in our history, and made health care reform a reality. And today, our economy is the strongest, most durable on Earth.

Our businesses have created more than 14 million jobs over 70 months, the longest streak of job growth on record. We have cut our unemployment rate in half. Our manufacturing sector has added nearly 900,000 jobs in the last six years—and our auto industry just had its best year of sales ever. We are less reliant on foreign oil than at any point in the previous four decades. Nearly 18 million people have gained health coverage under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), cutting the uninsured rate to a record low. Our children are graduating from high school at the highest rate ever. And we managed to accomplish all of this while dramatically cutting our deficits by almost three-quarters and setting our Nation on a more sustainable fiscal path. Together, we have brought America back.

Yet while it is important to take stock of our progress, this Budget is not about looking back at the road we have traveled. It is about looking forward. It is about making sure our economy works for everybody, not just those at the top. It is about choosing investments that not only make us stronger today, but also reflect the kind of country we aspire to be—the

kind of country we want to pass on to our children and grandchildren. It is about answering the big questions that will define America and the world in the 21st Century.

My Budget makes critical investments while adhering to the bipartisan budget agreement I signed into law last fall, and it lifts sequestration in future years so that we continue to invest in our economic future and our national security. It also drives down deficits and maintains our fiscal progress through smart savings from health care, immigration, and tax reforms. And, it focuses on meeting our greatest challenges not only for the year ahead, but for decades to come.

First, by accelerating the pace of American innovation, we can create jobs and build the economy of the future while tackling our greatest challenges, including addressing climate change and finding new treatments—and cures—for devastating diseases.

The challenge of climate change will define the contours of this century more dramatically than any other. Last year was the hottest on record, surpassing the record set just a year before. Climate change is already causing damage, including longer, more severe droughts and dangerous floods, disruptions to our food and water supply, and threats to our health, our economy, and our security.

We have made great strides to foster a robust clean energy industry and move our economy away from energy sources that fuel climate change. In communities across the Nation, wind power is now cheaper than dirtier, conventional power, and solar power is saving Americans tens of millions of dollars a year on their energy bills. The solar industry employs more workers than the coal industry—in jobs that pay better than average.

Despite these advances, we can and must do more. Rather than shrinking from the challenge, America must foster the spirit of innovation to create jobs, build a climate-smart economy of the future, and protect the only planet we have. To speed our transition to an affordable, reliable, clean energy system, my Budget funds Mission Innovation, our landmark commitment to double clean energy research and development funding. It also calls for a 21st Century Clean Transportation initiative that would help to put hundreds of thousands of Americans to work modernizing our infrastructure to ease congestion and make it easier for businesses to bring goods to market through new technologies such as autonomous vehicles and high-speed rail, funded through a fee paid by oil companies. It proposes to modernize our business tax system to promote innovation and job creation. It invests in strategies to make our communities more resilient to floods, wildfires, and other effects of climate change. And, it protects and modernizes our water supply and preserves our natural landscapes. These investments, coupled with those